

# CFA Koori Inclusion Action Plan (2014-2019)

*Working Together*, by Artist Emma Bamblett



## Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Victorians

CFA acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture. We pay respect to their Elders past and present. CFA also recognises the intrinsic connection to Country that Traditional Owners have and pays respect to how they have cared for Country for many thousands of years.

## Explanation of the use of terms

The term 'Koori' used throughout this document relates to Australian Indigenous people, who include people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. As a Victorian organisation, the word 'Koori' is employed by CFA as a way to represent all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in Victoria. We are committed to working closely with Traditional Owners and to advancing inclusion and engagement with all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in the State. Koori is the name by which Aboriginal people from Victoria and Southern New South Wales identify. Koori and Aboriginal may be used interchangeably throughout this document.

The term 'Caring for Country' is important for CFA to understand as part of improving inclusion and engagement with the Koori community. Caring for Country is more than the physical management of a geographical area or parcel of land. It encompasses looking after all of the values, places, resources, stories, and cultural obligations associated with that area, as well as associated processes of spiritual renewal, connecting with ancestors, food provision and maintaining kin relations. Moreover, the land is a sentient participant in this engagement. People talk about country in the same way that they would talk about a person. They speak to country, sing to country, visit country, worry about country, feel sorry for country, and long for country.

A detailed explanation of Aboriginal terminology can be found in CFA's Koori Protocol Guide.

## Artwork

The Artwork, *Working Together* by Artist Emma Bamblett, featured on the cover of the KIAP was commissioned by CFA in June 2014. It was created with CFA's vision—to work together with communities to keep Victorians safe from fire and other emergencies—in mind. The painting tells a story about CFA and focuses on several themes such as fire in the landscape, use of fire, Caring for Country, land management, collaboration, and community safety. The purple section in the middle of the painting represents CFA, where the white dots that are connecting the figures represent ongoing unity and sharing of knowledge when looking after land and communities. A detailed description of this painting can be found in Appendix 1. To increase Koori inclusion awareness, prints of this artwork will be displayed at CFA locations around the state.



Photo Emma Bamblett (Artist)

# Foreword

Inclusiveness must be central to the way CFA carries out its mission to protect lives and property in partnership with Victorian communities.

CFA warmly welcomes this Koori Inclusion Action Plan which lays out a path to greater inclusion of the 47,000-strong community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples spread across the state.

The bedrock of this plan is an appreciation for the way the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in all their diversity, have cared for country for tens of thousands of years. CFA and the Aboriginal community share a culture of fire and have a strong link as custodians of the land and champions of the responsible use and management of fire.

We have a responsibility to ensure that emergency management practices are considerate of Aboriginal heritage. The building of a solid partnership with the Aboriginal community will enable deeper cultural exchange and knowledge sharing to benefit all Victorians.

CFA will gain great strength by fostering strong partnerships with Aboriginal people to ensure the greater cultural relevance of our programs and better access to our services. Significantly, the plan will also pave the way for more Aboriginal people to join our staff and volunteer ranks.

This plan points the way to CFA broadening its culture as both a service provider and a workplace. CFA services are provided for the community, by the community. It's vital that Aboriginal people have equal access to the benefits of CFA training programs; the chance to further develop their leadership and teamwork skills; and an opportunity to play a vital protective and educative role in their communities.

CFA understands the importance of authentic and sustained Koori engagement and inclusion and is proud to commit to the 20 actions in this plan.



**Mick Bourke**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Euan Ferguson**  
Chief Officer



*Barapa-Wemba man, Ron Murray performs at District 20 HQ Cultural Sharing Day June 2014*

# Introduction

This *CFA Koori Inclusion Action Plan (KIAP) 2014-2019* was developed in keeping and in accordance with Aboriginal community, CFA and Victorian Government priorities. These include:

- CFA's Vision – *to work together with communities to keep Victorians safe from fire and other emergencies*
- CFA's Strategy – *Towards Resilience (2013-2018)*
- the Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework (DPCD 2011).

The inclusion framework helps government departments become more inclusive of Aboriginal perspectives in the design and delivery of policies and programs. Through this focus, Aboriginal Victorians will experience increased access to, participation in and effectiveness of services.

To improve CFA's Koori, inclusion it is first necessary to appreciate the broader the inclusion issues that Aboriginal people experience in Victoria. The Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework states:

*“Understanding the experiences of exclusion and how it impacts on the lives of Aboriginal people, their families and communities is central to improving government systems and services. If individuals, families and communities do not trust service providers or fear discrimination, their access to services will be diminished. This in turn diminishes the entitlement of Aboriginal Victorians to achieve the same opportunities and outcomes as other members of the Victorian community”.*

Many Aboriginal people, families and communities experience exclusion as the complex and enduring legacy of previous government approaches and policies. The key to improving the lives of Victorian Aboriginal people is to build partnerships, trust and mutual respect and focus on the areas that will foster strong cultural, social and economic outcomes. Of the Government's six Strategic Action Areas (SAAs) to improve outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians, CFA aims to contribute to the following three:

SAA 2: Education and training

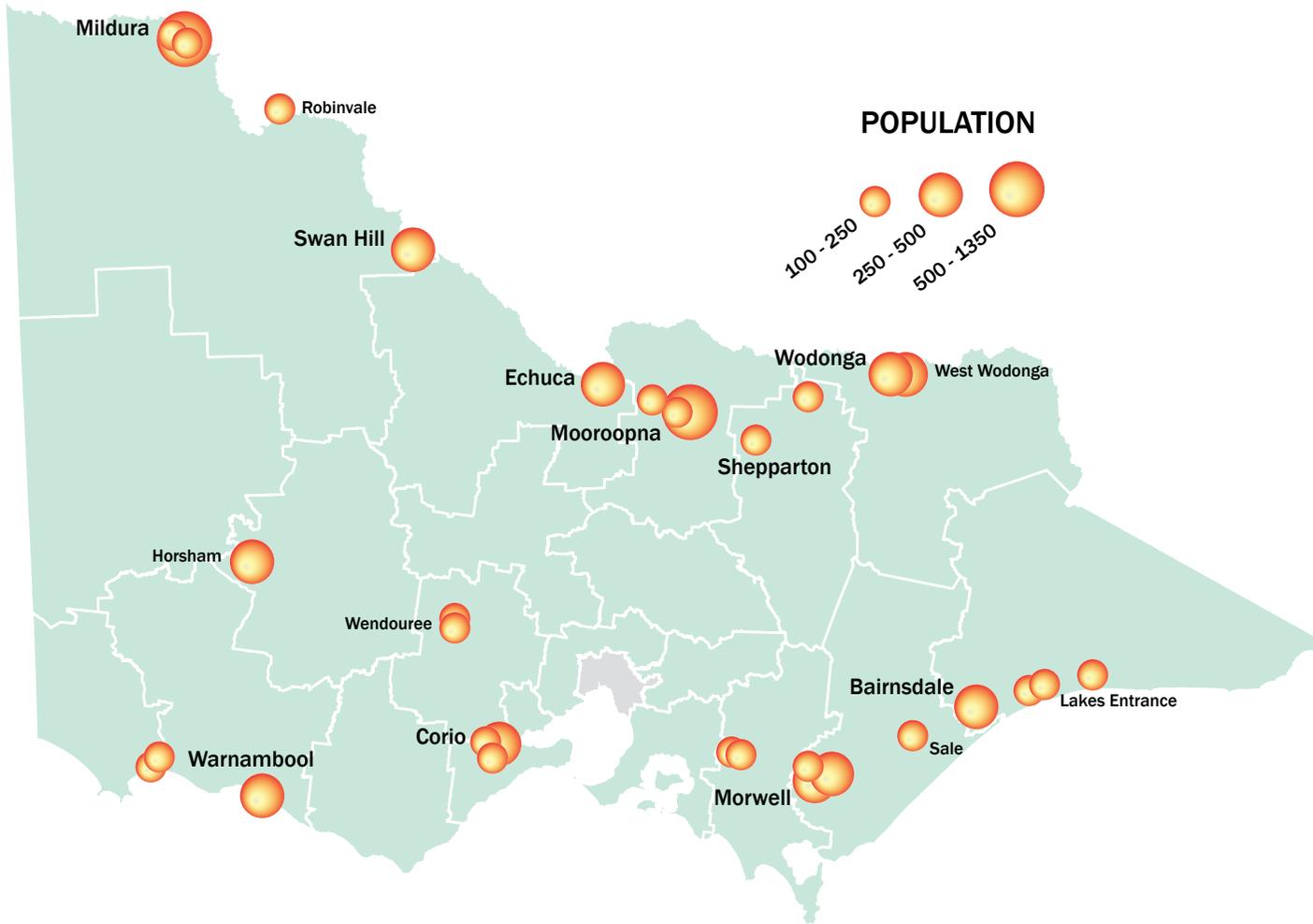
SAA 3: Economic participation

SAA 6: Strong culture, engaged people and confident communities.

Until now, CFA has not collected data specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members nor worked at an organisational or policy level to focus specifically on Koori inclusion and engagement. Although there are some brigades and members working very closely together with the Koori community, there is a huge scope to improve CFA's inclusion and engagement that could significantly benefit the Koori community.

Charmaine Sellings, member of the all Aboriginal CFA Lake Tyers Satellite brigade for over twenty years puts it this way: “It's wonderful to know that the CFA is embarking on a learning journey and I look forward to helping other CFA volunteers understand more about Aboriginal culture and heritage. This is the way forward, this is what CFA needs. The Koori Inclusion Action Plan is vital to stamping out racism and highlighting CFA's commitment and acknowledgment of Koori inclusion.”

The CFA KIAP signals the start of a new journey that the organisation and the Aboriginal community are beginning together. Through this work, CFA's structures, behaviours, culture and values will increasingly reflect our respect for the Koori community, the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we now all live and work as Victorians.



## People and Places

There are 38 Aboriginal Tribes in Victoria. Some of these tribes are represented by Registered Aboriginal Parties that have been set up across the State to manage and protect cultural heritage.

The Koori community is growing as recent census data shows. According to the 2011 census, there are over 47,000 Aboriginal people living in Victoria and it is projected

that by 2021 there will be over 80,000 (source: *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-18*). There are locations across the State where the Aboriginal population is higher. In these locations, CFA will focus on community-specific approaches to working with the local community. The map above displays these locations.

# KIAP Objectives

Our objective is to improve inclusion across four key areas:

1. **Systemic Koori Inclusion** – how we will implement organisational change to create a shared responsibility for Koori outcomes
2. **Data, Service Delivery and Emergency Management** – how we will make evidence-based decisions to create increasingly culturally responsive programs and services and ensure emergency management practices are considerate of aboriginal heritage
3. **Koori Volunteerism, Employment, Training and Economic Participation** – how we will support participation through volunteerism, employment, training and procurement
4. **Communication, Engagement and Partnerships** – how we will increase Koori community knowledge of and engagement with CFA programs and services as well as develop partnerships for cultural exchange and knowledge sharing.

The *CFA KIAP (2014-2019)* contains 20 actions and was developed through the KIAP Project, June 2013 - October 2014.



*Photo Charmaine Sellings member of Lake Tyers Satellite brigade*



At the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust CFA has an all Aboriginal Satellite brigade, which has been operating for over 20 years. Originally an all women crew, it has a proud history of serving the local community and has reduced fire incidences on the Trust significantly since it began.

# 1 Key Action Area – Systemic Koori Inclusion

Note: This Key Action Area relates to policy, processes/procedures etc. being embedded within CFA to ensure Koori outcomes increasingly become part of core business and are sustainable.

## Why is it important?

One of the key themes that emerged during consultation with the Koori community, and which informed the Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework was the need for inclusion to be embedded in government process to provide inclusive, consistent and accessible services to the Koori community. CFA recognises that to reach a point where our organisation collectively embraces Koori outcomes as a shared responsibility, inclusion needs to be systemically embedded within our core business processes. When Koori inclusion increasingly becomes core business for CFA, we will be in a position to achieve sustainable change, leading to better inclusion and a more culturally sensitive and welcoming organisation.

## Where are the opportunities for growth?

By connecting the organisational KIAP with respective directorates, there is real opportunity to achieve systemic Koori inclusion.

CFA directorate business plans are comprehensive and span all areas of core business and projects. The organisation is committed to actively strengthening the inclusion of Koori culture throughout CFA, and recognises the need to include Koori voices in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of policies and programs that directly or indirectly affect the Koori community.

No.	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this action item be achieved?
1	<p>CFA will embed the KIAP in the Corporate Plan</p> <p>Relevant actions will be incorporated within Directorate and Regional Business Plans, including identifying responsibility for actions in relevant service delivery plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Plans include a section about Koori inclusion and engagement.</li> </ul>	<p>The KIAP is incorporated within the CFA Corporate Plan 2015-16 and relevant actions incorporated within Directorate and Regional Business Plans.</p> <p>Beyond 2015-16, KIAP is applied to any future CFA planning.</p>	<p>Performance and Strategy, Chief Executive Officer Fire and Emergency Management ACOs</p>	<p>June 2015 (for 2015-16 plans) and each subsequent year at time of plan development.</p>
2	<p>The KIAP will be incorporated into performance/dashboard reporting. It will be discussed and considered at senior leadership meetings including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board meetings</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team (ELT) meetings</li> <li>Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings</li> <li>Region Leadership (RLT) meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>Progress on the KIAP is integrated into the monthly performance/dashboard reporting to ELT, and quarterly reporting to the Board.</p>	<p>Communities Communication for reports to Board</p>	<p>Inclusion in dashboard reporting – June 2015</p> <p>This process will start no later than December 2014 and will be refined thereafter.</p>
<p>Active implementation of the KIAP across the directorates of CFA is represented in dashboard reports to the ELT and quarterly reports to the Board.</p>		<p>F&amp;EM (inclusion of KIAP into the dashboard report)</p>		
<p>The KIAP is a shared responsibility across all levels of CFA (Board, directorates and program areas) with increased understanding and communication of our progress on short-and long-term outcomes.</p>		<p>The Board ELT SLTs RLTs</p>		

No.	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this action item be achieved?
3	<p>CFA will be considerate of research and evaluation inclusion opportunities and potential impacts of new concepts in relation to Koori communities and members by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring CFA evaluation and research activities such as surveys, questionnaires and any resulting reports are considerate of Koori inclusion. This includes ensuring questions are relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in addition to fulfilling an aim to gather data.</li> <li>• Refreshing CFA's strategy development guidance to include consideration of service and program impact on Kooris.</li> <li>• Refreshing the Enterprise Priority Investment Panel's terms of reference to consider the potential impacts on Koori communities from concept briefs and proposals for investments that it reviews.</li> </ul>	<p>CFA research, evaluations and reports include any Koori related data, findings and outcomes, where appropriate and are used to inform CFA practices, procedures, strategies, programs and services.</p> <p>Content in surveys, etc is relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p>CFA strategies reflect consideration to service and program impact on Koori communities and members</p> <p>The Enterprise Priority Investment Panel's terms of reference refreshed and impacts of concept briefs and proposals for investment on Koori communities are being considered.</p>	<p>Communities and Communications Research and Evaluation team and Manager Corporate Strategy</p>	<p>December 2015</p>
4	<p>CFA will host researchers from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in early 2015, to carry out a research project called 'Koori Engagement in Emergency Services'. The results will be used to inform CFA policies, procedures and practices in relation to Koori members.</p>	<p>Research report from WPI research project completed.</p> <p>CFA policies, procedures and practices are reflective of findings in the WPI research.</p>	<p>Communities and Communication Research and Evaluation team</p>	<p>Research 2015 Policies and Procedures reflecting research findings December 2017</p>



Photographs by James Henry, taken at the Koorie Night Market, May 2014



Rockbank and Melton brigade members celebrated alongside their local Indigenous community to mark Reconciliation Week at an event held at the Melton Community Hall on Friday 30 May 2014. The Rockbank brigade brought their tanker along and CFA members learnt about traditional fire practices from some Aboriginal members from a remote community in the northern Australia. It was a great way for CFA to participate in Reconciliation Week and learn more about Aboriginal culture.

No.	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this action item be achieved?
5	<p>CFA will be a welcoming organisation to the Koori community. We will acknowledge the traditional owners of the land through the following deeds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring an acknowledgment to the traditional owners of the land is conducted at the beginning of all official CFA meetings and activities.</li> <li>• Ensuring a 'Welcome to Country' is conducted by the appropriate Koori elder or representative at significant CFA events or meetings.</li> <li>• Ensuring the Traditional Owners of the land are acknowledged on official documents as well as in CFA buildings and stations such as; a plaque or welcome sign.</li> <li>• Ensuring the Aboriginal flag and/or welcome sign is displayed at CFA stations and buildings (particularly those with a significant Koori community).</li> <li>• Displaying Koori artwork in CFA buildings.</li> <li>• Koori culture/design is considered in the development of buildings, publications, etc.</li> <li>• Arranging Koori cultural performances (e.g. smoking ceremony) at CFA building openings.</li> <li>• Meeting rooms named with Aboriginal language words or in honour of significant Aboriginal people.</li> <li>• Advertising Koori Calendar events in CFA Calendars.</li> <li>• CFA will participate in activities and days of significance to the Koori community such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NAIDOC week</li> <li>• Reconciliation Week.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>CFA members will have an increased understanding of acknowledgement of Country.</p> <p>CFA celebrates and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, tradition and history.</p> <p>CFA buildings and publications will reflect Koori culture where appropriate (artwork, room names, etc).</p> <p>CFA participates in activities and days of cultural significance to the Koori community regularly.</p> <p>CFA holds at least one annual event (e.g. during NAIDOC week).</p> <p>Aboriginal dates of significance are included on CFA calendars.</p>	<p>CEO Executive Leadership Team – All Directorates and Departments</p> <p>Regions, districts</p> <p>Communities &amp; Communications for event management</p>	<p>2014 Started and ongoing</p>

## 2 Key Action Area – Data, Service Delivery and Emergency Management

*Note: This Key Action Area relates to information collection, understanding of enablers and barriers to engaging with CFA services.*

### Why is it important?

An understanding of the Koori communities' experiences with exclusion and how it impacts will provide greater understanding on how to achieve inclusion of the Koori community in CFA's forward business planning. It is important for CFA to continue to work with the Koori community to establish an understanding of the enablers and barriers to access and participation in programs and services. CFA is committed to the Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs principle of accountability and the notion that we must all be accountable for delivering services that meet the needs of communities. The CFA Corporate Strategy principals of approach, Banding Together, Thinking Differently and Driving Real Change can also be applied to the KIAP when we consider the opportunities for growth within this key action area.

### Where are the opportunities for growth?

There is significant room for growth to improve the data collected and recorded in relation to Koori membership and activities undertaken with the Koori community within CFA. Collecting relevant data and understanding this data is critical for determining future strategies for improving Koori involvement in CFA. In relation to service delivery and emergency management, there are significant opportunities for collaboration on planned burning, culture sharing and learning between CFA and Koori community members, and supporting the healing process for some Koori people through the use of fire. CFA has much to learn about Aboriginal cultural heritage and the protection of culturally sensitive sites. There may be opportunities to adapt procedures and use local knowledge to help inform the protection of these sites. Maps displaying Aboriginal Traditional Owners and Cultural Heritage can be provided to brigades to improve understanding, and to inspire conversation and enhance learning.

No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
6	<p>Include a question on CFA membership surveys to ascertain the baseline % of CFA volunteers who currently identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander <i>and</i></p> <p>Encourage new and existing staff members to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders and update membership records.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CFA administration forms will contain a question about identity to record Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status. Examples include CFA's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• membership form</li> <li>• employment application form</li> <li>• recruitment form</li> <li>• Member Self Service system</li> <li>• member surveys and questionnaires.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Create a database to store Koori membership records for future consideration and planning.</p>	<p>All CFA members surveyed (with a return rate of 10%) to capture the baseline % that currently identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.</p> <p>CFA members are voluntarily identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and CFA membership records reflect this captured data on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>A database of members that is representative of the people in the organisation who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is maintained.</p>	<p>People and Culture OT&amp;V</p>	<p>July 2015 (baseline)</p> <p>Begin collection of data on new members 2014</p>

No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
7	Once the baseline has been established, track, monitor and evaluate workforce demographics of members (volunteer and staff) that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.	Member support services will have a greater understanding of the barriers and enablers in relation to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander members' inclusion within CFAs workforce (volunteers and staff). Increased understanding on how we can enhance, assist provide pathways for Koori members' professional development.	People and Culture, OT&V, Performance and Evaluation.	June 2019
8	Record activities undertaken with Koori communities (educational and/or other) and report on these activities via a central process/system. • Establish a central reporting process/system as part of an existing reporting system such as CRM.	A central reporting process / system established to capture data in relation to these activities. Various Koori engagement activities are occurring and being reported across the State at a brigade, district and regional level.	F&EM – Community Capability Regions	Central reporting process established by 2016 Activities will be recorded as they occur and will be ongoing
9	Koori communities will be identified and available as an overlay on CFA brigade, district and region boundary maps.	Koori communities are identified and digitised in CFA mapping tools. Brigades, districts and regions have access to mapped information (overlays) of Koori Communities and are utilising this information in local activities. Brigades, districts and regions have increased understanding of how their areas intersect with the Traditional Owners of the land.	Business Services – GIS	June 2015
10	A process for Brigades to access information about culturally significant sites and cultural heritage in their area is established in consultation with the local Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP).	Brigades have been granted permission through the local Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) to access data about locations of culturally significant sites. Brigades use this data to improve response planning and planned burning to help protect and manage culturally significant sites in their area.	Communities and Communication Fire and Emergency Management	December 2015

In September 2014 CFA Vegetation Management Office sent two representatives to a Traditional Burning Workshop in Orange NSW, run in partnership with the local Aboriginal community and the Local Land Services of NSW. This gave CFA an opportunity to understand traditional burning practices and to spend time with the local Aboriginal community to share knowledge and learnings about managing the land. It is hoped that CFA can host a similar forum here in Victoria in 2015 or 2016.



No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
11	<p>Update emergency management procedures to ensure Aboriginal sacred sites and sites of significance are included in response plans and related training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain communication or work in partnership with DEPI in relation to updates to procedures and any impacts this may have on Incident Management Teams (IMTs)</li> </ul>	<p>Emergency management procedures have been reviewed and updated to better inform response plans (and related training) in relation to Aboriginal sacred sites and sites of significance.</p> <p>CFA members have a greater awareness of the importance of managing Aboriginal sacred sites during a fire or other incident.</p> <p>CFA members on IMTs actively seek advice from local Koori members about the impact of potential fire suppression activities on sacred sites and sites of significance and include this information in response plans.</p> <p>Brigades, where possible, are upholding the protection of Aboriginal sacred sites and sites of significance during an emergency.</p>	<p>F&amp;EM OT&amp;V – Training</p>	<p>June 2016</p> <p>Ongoing considerations in response plans and related training June 2019</p>
12	<p>CFA will work collaboratively with Koori communities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>share vegetation management knowledge</li> <li>increase awareness of cultural burning traditions</li> <li>increase Koori community engagement in CFA activities through the Vegetation Management Program. For example, planned burning activities.</li> </ul> <p>CFA will collaborate with Aboriginal communities locally about the rehabilitation of traditional lands to better inform and increase the shared understanding of caring for country.</p>	<p>Shared planned burning programs/ agreements have been investigated.</p> <p>CFA Vegetation Management Officers (state wide) are liaising with local Koori communities about planned burns and Koori communities are taking part in vegetation management planning.</p> <p>Planned burns are conducted in partnership with Koori communities.</p> <p>CFA representatives are members of and are present at the LIN to increase shared understanding of vegetation management between local Koori communities and CFA as they relate to planned burning.</p> <p>CFA members and Koori community members have a greater appreciation and increased understanding of Koori cultural traditions and for the use of fire in Caring for Country.</p>	<p>F&amp;EM Vegetation Management Program F&amp;EM - regions</p>	<p>Loddon Mallee and Grampians regions Dja Dja Wurrung Land Use Activity Agreement – CFA Planned Burning January 2016 (liaising with Koori communities, members of LIN) June 2017 (Koories taking part in planned burns) Loddon Mallee region commencement partnerships October 2014. All regions June 2019</p>

### 3 Key Action Area – Koori Volunteerism, Employment, Training and Economic Participation

Note: This Key Action Area relates to CFA being seen as a welcoming organisation to the Koori community in relation to Volunteering and employment.

#### Why is it important?

CFA's Volunteerism Strategy shapes how CFA focuses and drives volunteerism across the organisation, a central focus of which is diversity. CFA offers training, skill development and leadership opportunities for its members which could benefit members of the Koori community. We also offer employment opportunities in career fire-fighting and in a range of other administrative and technical roles. As such, CFA is committed to developing a strong Koori Employment Strategy and supporting brigades to be more inclusive and welcoming of Aboriginal Victorians. We recognise the opportunity to create more cohesive, holistic and inclusive brigade membership participation as well as programs and service delivery.

#### Where are the opportunities for growth?

In response to the Victorian Aboriginal Public Sector Employment and Career Development Action Plan, *Karreeta Yirramboi*, CFA has made a commitment to creating a Koori friendly organisation to increase Koori membership of and employment with CFA. Part of continuing to successfully attract, retain and grow our Koori membership is depends on providing a culturally safe and welcoming workplace. The organisation will provide programs and resources to build our capacity as an organisation to support Koori engagement, volunteerism, employment and economic participation. It is clear from a wide range of income, investment and labour force indicators that the gap in economic outcomes between Koori and non-Kooris is significant.<sup>2</sup> CFA will actively consider Koori economic participation in purchasing and procurement practices, particularly given our presence in regional Victoria.

No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
13	<p>Develop and deliver a Koori Cultural Awareness Information and Education program for CFA members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage Koori Elders, respected persons and community members in the development and delivery of Koori cultural awareness information and education.</li> <li>Create CFA specific resources, including a film to ensure relevance and value to CFA.</li> <li>Capture cultural awareness sessions delivered on CFA systems to enable future reporting.</li> <li>Prioritise sessions to brigades and districts and communities with Koori interface.</li> <li>Deliver Koori Cultural Awareness sessions to key staff positions such as wellbeing field officers, district volunteers and operational members.</li> <li>Where possible, conduct Koori Cultural Awareness Sessions at Koori community centres rather than hiring facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>CFA members have access to and have participated in CFA members, particularly those with Koori interface, have access to and have participated in Koori Cultural Awareness education.</p> <p>CFA members will have increased ability to effectively engage with Koori members and the broader Koori community.</p> <p>Participation in the education session is tracked via web TRAIN</p>	Communities & Communication OT&V	December 2014 (development) and 2015 (delivery)

<sup>2</sup>Victorian Government Indigenous Affairs Report 2010-11

No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
14	<p>Attract, retain and grow Koori staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out focus group testing and have an Aboriginal Advisory Group (established as part of the KIAP project) to assist with advice about CFA employment.</li> <li>• Produce a CFA Aboriginal Employment Plan.</li> <li>• CFA recruitment efforts reach out to Aboriginal job seekers such as taking part in Koori Employment Expos.</li> <li>• Work with Koori communities and other key stakeholders to improve Koori access to employment with CFA</li> <li>• Provide Koori traineeships and appropriate funding model(s).</li> <li>• Promote CFA as an employer of choice using Aboriginal ambassador.</li> <li>• Firefighter recruitment inclusion plan contains strategies for Koori inclusion.</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with Peak Bodies and local Koori organisations.</li> <li>• Advertise in Koori media (3KND, Koori Mail, NITV, etc).</li> </ul>	<p>Increased Koori employee attraction and retention rate.</p> <p>Koori trainees find employment in CFA.</p> <p>Appropriate employment support for Koori members is available as required/ requested.</p>	People and Culture	Focus group testing in 2014; employment plan to be developed in 2015
15	<p>Encourage, support and engage Koori volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Koori Advisory Group to provide advice about improving CFA membership uptake by Koori community members</li> <li>• Investigate best practice in the delivery of training to Koori community members</li> <li>• Address brigades with a strong Koori interface will be provided with cultural understanding, education and support</li> <li>• Barriers to brigade involvement</li> <li>• Develop culturally applicable materials for recruitment and retainment</li> <li>• Work with the Koori Youth Council in developing pathways for young people to join and be part of CFA</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with Peak Bodies and local Koori organisations</li> <li>• Develop a culturally appropriate relationship management and conflict resolution process for Koori members.</li> </ul>	<p>Brigades with Koori Interface are supported with Koori cultural awareness, information and education.</p> <p>CFA's training delivery is accessible and considerate of Koori learner needs.</p> <p>Appropriate support for Koori members is available as required/requested.</p> <p>CFA increases the amount of Aboriginal people who volunteer for CFA</p>	F&EM OT&V People and Culture – Wellbeing team	Commencing 2014 and ongoing



Photo from NAIDOC Week celebration at CFA July 2014. From left to right Georgina Nicholson (Wurundjeri Elder), Emma Bamblett (Artist), Mick Bourke (CEO) and Daryl Smith (CFA, South Morang)

CFA has a number of members that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Daryl Smith is a Koori CFA member at the South Morang brigade. He has been part of the brigade since 2009. Daryl participated in the KIAP Advisory Group alongside other key Koori and CFA members and his advice has been invaluable in the development of this plan. He has offered to support and mentor any new CFA Koori members in the future.

No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
16	<p>In line with the Victorian Government's priority to improve Koori economic development and participation, CFA will actively consider this priority through its purchasing processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update procurement procedures.</li> <li>• Update value for money documentation to include consideration of Koori businesses and minority suppliers.</li> <li>• Update documents to identify Koori business that are members of the Australian Indigenous Minority Supplier Council and the Victorian Indigenous Business Network.</li> <li>• Conduct awareness sessions during relevant manager forums regarding the exemption policy and Koori inclusion.</li> <li>• Use internal communication channels to build greater awareness of possibilities for Koori procurement.</li> <li>• Investigate clauses for tender documentation that can encourage provisions for Koori inclusion and employment from suppliers – this could apply to both goods, services and capital.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CFA chooses to use Koori business and suppliers and this enhances Koori economic participation.</li> </ul>	Business Services	December 2016



The Broadford Brigade attended the annual Voices Around the Campfire event on the 6 of October 2013 in support of the local Aboriginal community. The Brigade Captain and Koori community member, Jamie Atkins is proud of the Brigade's commitment to engaging with their diverse community.



No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
17	<p>Regional offices will support Koori economic development and participation through procurement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the Victorian Indigenous Business Directory (online <a href="http://directory.business.vic.gov.au/indigenous/">http://directory.business.vic.gov.au/indigenous/</a> and hardcopy).</li> <li>• Utilise Koori facilitators, Koori venue hire for meetings and functions (where appropriate), and understand procurement processes with regards to select, tender and minority suppliers.</li> <li>• Commission Koori artwork.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CFA offices are utilising the Indigenous Business Directory for purchasing and seeking quotes and tenders.</li> <li>• Some CFA meetings are held at Koori venues and/or facilitated by Koori consultants.</li> <li>• Purchasing Checklist includes prompt to consider how we can support Koori economic participation.</li> <li>• Koori artwork is commissioned and displayed in CFA buildings.</li> </ul>	<p>Business Services Regional Directors, Business Managers and Finance Managers</p>	<p>Guide and/or website link sent out to regions by September 2015</p> <p>Procurement processes are ongoing</p>
18	<p>Land and Building Services will request that construction project tenderers consider in their response to the tender brief, the following</p> <p><i>'The Builder will endeavour to employ Indigenous workers to assist in the delivery of the Works, for the duration of the Works, for Private Public Partnerships projects.</i></p> <p><i>For standard delivered major projects, where relevant to local Indigenous issues:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consultants where relevant will endeavour to demonstrate that the design of building structures, materials, form and substance respond appropriately and in a culturally significant way and</i></li> <li>• <i>Builders where relevant will endeavour to demonstrate an understanding of local issues and provide methods by which the employment of local Aboriginal staff can be optimised'.</i></li> </ul>	<p>CFA buildings reflect Koori culture where appropriate.</p> <p>Koori consideration requirements will be included in organisational tender documentation.</p>	<p>Land and Building</p>	<p>From December 2016 onwards</p>

## Key Action Area – Communication, Engagement and Partnerships

Note: This Key Action Area relates to effective communication and engagement with the Koori community, developing a deeper understanding of how to deliver engaging and inclusive services, forming partnerships and sharing knowledge and experiences.

### Why is it important?

Our communication and engagement with the Koori community directly impacts on our ability to deliver effective services. By engaging Koories and forming collaborative partnerships, we are able to develop a deeper understanding of how to effectively respond to the community's needs. CFA supports the Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs principle of engagement and inclusiveness, acknowledging that 'Closing the Gap' can only be achieved through a partnership built on genuine engagement with Aboriginal people across this state. There are many established Aboriginal groups throughout Victoria, as highlighted in the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-18 (VAAF). It is important for CFA to tap into and partner with these existing groups in local areas across the state. The VAAF information in figure 1 highlights both current established networks and the new structures that exist within VAAF.

### Where are the opportunities for growth?

CFA has identified an opportunity to improve Koori community knowledge of and access to CFA membership and services by combining collective experience, forming partnerships and effectively communicating with the community. CFA is in a unique position to be able to increase engagement with Koori communities around the topic of fire, particularly planned burning. Connections can be made between CFA and the Aboriginal philosophy and practice of *Caring for Country*, providing the means for a more authentic and meaningful relationship. There is also an opportunity for local brigades and districts to establish or enhance local connections and partnerships through the Local Indigenous Networks (LINs). Ideally, each CFA district will have contact with the local LIN and will have built sustainable relationships with the network.

#### ESTABLISHED ARRANGEMENTS

##### Statewide and Regional Partnership and Engagement Structures

A range of engagement structures have been established with Aboriginal leaders and organisations to address policy and service priorities and action. These include:

- Traditional Owners Groups
- Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council
- Registered Aboriginal Parties
- Regional Closing the Gap Health Committees
- Local Aboriginal Education Consultive Groups
- Aboriginal Justice Forum
- Regional and Local Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees
- DHS Aboriginal Roundtables
- Indigenous Family Violence Forum and Regional Action Groups.

##### Local Indigenous Networks (LINs)

Since 2008, 39 LINs have been established across Victoria, with over 1,600 Aboriginal Victorians currently participating in LINs. Functions of LINs include:

- setting local priorities and problem solve to develop local solutions
- developing local community plans
- improving social cohesion and strengthening relationships
- empowering Aboriginal people to participate in civic and community life.

#### NEW STRUCTURES

##### Ministerial Roundtables

At least three Roundtable discussions will be hosted each year to bring together Ministers and Aboriginal leaders. These Roundtables will:

- inform policy, priorities and action, including on specific issues or proposals
- build mutual understandings
- provide for the sharing of information and views.

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs hosted three roundtables in 2012, including an Aboriginal Women's Roundtable and two Aboriginal Leaders Roundtables. Issues discussed included key priorities for Aboriginal affairs, economic development, youth transitions to further education and employment, improved service delivery and stronger accountability frameworks.

##### Sub-Regional Forums

To enable effective engagement with government at the regional level, the Victorian Government will host forums in regional, sub-regional and metropolitan locations across Victoria. These forums will:

- build upon and complement existing consultative and advisory structures
- offer people the opportunity to explore and share areas of interest
- enable local voices and experiences to be heard
- provide an important source of advice to departments and government.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Affairs Engagement Structures



Barmah brigade has developed an authentic and strong relationship with the local Aboriginal community by being open and welcoming. Brigade members also took part in some Koori Cultural Insight Training in June 2014 to increase their understanding of Aboriginal history, culture and heritage. They now have several Aboriginal members and also Junior members and feel they are a better brigade because of this involvement.

No	What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
19	<p>CFA will include the at risk* Koori community in the communication of mainstream programs and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target the distribution of communication products to Aboriginal community controlled organisations (ACCOs), peak bodies and Forums.</li> <li>• Attend local Aboriginal events and community organisations.</li> <li>• Tailor core fire safety education programs such as Fire Safe Youth, Fire Safe Kids, FireReady Victoria and Community Fireguard to be culturally sensitive and relevant to Koori community members.</li> <li>• Tailor CFA fire safety and community safety to be culturally sensitive and relevant to Koori members.</li> <li>• Provide engagement tip sheets for CFA members to assist with Koori engagement based on the Principles of Engagement identified by Aboriginal Victorians and detailed in the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (2013-2019).</li> </ul> <p>*At risk Koori community members are those at risk from fire, including bushfire and house fire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CFA communication products are culturally inclusive.</li> <li>• The Koori community has access to clear information about CFA programs and services, including volunteerism and careers.</li> <li>• Increased Koori community awareness of fire safety.</li> <li>• Fire safety education programs and information are culturally sensitive and relevant to Koori community members.</li> </ul>	Communities & Communications F&EM	<p>Ongoing from 2014. Tip sheet produced by June 2015.</p> <p>Tailoring of programs completed by June 2018</p>
20	<p>CFA will build and maintain partnerships with Aboriginal communities to increase awareness of emergency management and community safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a Koori Cultural Awareness Program with CFA members and local community.</li> <li>• Encourage and promote opportunities for cultural exchange and information sharing.</li> <li>• Make local connections with Aboriginal groups and organisations to build local relationships such as LINS</li> <li>• Develop and promote stories and case studies about activities undertaken by CFA in partnership with Aboriginal community members.</li> </ul>	<p>Articles about Koori inclusion activities appear in CFA publications such as News and Media, Brigade Magazine and regional newsletters.</p> <p>Case studies about partnerships and activities are developed and promoted via internal and external communication channels.</p> <p>Increased cultural exchange and information sharing between CFA members and the Aboriginal community.</p>	Communities & Communications F&EM	Ongoing from 2014

# Next Steps:

## Implementation

Implementation of the CFA KIAP was in place in parallel to the development of the plan. This was critical for ensuring the KIAP had some tangible and successful outcomes that would in turn generate further action and build momentum. As a result, implementation was underway in mid-2014 and this has, as hoped, generated sound support and commitment for the implementation of the action items over the next five years.

Progress on implementation will be reported to the CFA Executive Leadership Team monthly (for significant milestones) and annually for more detailed progress on each action area. Achievements and related evidence will be shared and promoted through relevant publications from CFA Communities & Communications. KIAP Project progress will be included in the CFA's Annual Report. It will be reported (via Department of Justice to the Secretary) to the Secretaries' Leadership Group on Aboriginal Affairs under the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework.

## Review

The KIAP will be reviewed annually to ensure continuous relevance of original actions and to ensure tangible and intangible successes are being realised.



*Photo Daryl Smith in his yellows (CFA, South Morang)*

# Appendix 1

This painting titled *Working Together* by artist Emma Bamblett was commissioned by CFA in June 2014 to demonstrate our commitment to Aboriginal inclusion and engagement as outlined in CFA's Koori Inclusion Action Plan 2014-2019.

## The story of this painting

“The purple section in the middle of the painting represents CFA. The white dots that are connecting the figures represent ongoing unity and sharing of knowledge when looking after land and communities. The grey areas with the faces represents the ancestors that are protecting us daily and the importance of their contribution around caring for land, animals, family, community and traditional ways. By placing them in the painting, I have shown that we do respect their stories, history and knowledge.

The maroon sections curled around the grey areas represent building relationships with CFA staff, volunteers and community. The circles within represent connecting and the curved lines represent links. The light purple area with the footprints represents a journey. The footprints are CFA staff and volunteers walking and working together to create a safe environment for community. There are different shapes and colours to represent our diverse community.

The large black circle with the white dots represents community safety. It represents CFA's role when delivering community education, being present at community events and ensuring that clear messages about fire safety are being communicated.

The bottom middle section of the painting represents CFA as an organisation.

The bottom right section represents the use of fire. The red coloured circles with the lines in the middle represent the use of burning off in a safe and controlled environment. The figures represent CFA presence and knowledge when caring for land. The grey circles represent new life after burning.

The bottom left side represents collaboration and working together. The light maroon curved lines represent the terms ‘ongoing’ and ‘building’. The white dots represent coming together to sit at the table to talk, work together, share knowledge, listen and build relationships.

The area in the top left corner represents land management. The curved hill symbol represents the land and the different shapes of land across the state. The black dots within each of the sections represent fire in the landscapes. They represent and mark times in history when there has been devastating events happen. It represents and pays tribute to the many CFA workers, volunteers and community and their important roles when dealing with fire on the land.

The top middle sections represent important concepts for Aboriginal people when caring for the land. The footprints represent Aboriginal people living on the land, knowledge around looking after land, and connection to land. The dots connecting with lines represent sharing knowledge, passing down messages and traditional ways when caring for land.

The grey section at the top right hand of the painting represents the way we care for the land and community. The figures in the middle of this section represent people living and working on land. The circles within the area represent training, education and sharing information when caring for community and the land. The curved hill lines represent the many lands and areas that we live on. The shields represent our resilience and ongoing commitment to keeping community and land safe.

The red lined sections throughout the painting represent fire. They are placed throughout the painting to show that no matter where you are in Victoria a fire can start. The small maroon sections with the white curved lines represent water and the importance that water plays when dealing with fire. It represents a place of safety and a source of assistance when dealing with fire”.

–Emma Bamblett